

## ***MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENTS***

**Purpose** This Air Quality Group procedure describes the process for conducting periodic management assessments of projects and programs in the group in compliance with Criteria 9 of the Laboratory Quality Assurance Management Plan.

**Scope** This procedure applies to the group leader, and any team leaders in the group who perform management assessments.

**In this procedure** This procedure addresses the following major topics:

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## General information about this procedure

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**Attachments** This procedure has the following attachments:

Number	Attachment Title	No. of pages
1	Guidance for Planning, Conducting, and Evaluating Management Assessments	2
2	Example Management Assessment Plan	1

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**History of revision** This table lists the revision history and effective dates of this procedure.

Revision	Date	Description Of Changes
0	7/24/95	New document.
1	10/11/96	Management and process changes

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**Who requires training to this procedure?** The following personnel require training before implementing this procedure:

- group leader
- team leaders
- assessment team members

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**Training method** The training method for this procedure is "self-study" (reading) and is documented in accordance with the procedure for training (ESH-17-024).

## General information, continued

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### Definitions specific to this procedure

Management assessment: an evaluation to determine how well management is providing the leadership to enable an organization to continuously meet the customers' requirements and expectations. Strengths and weaknesses affecting the achievement of organizational objectives are identified so that meaningful action can be taken to improve quality.

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### References

The following documents are referenced in this procedure:

- ESH-17-024, "Personnel Training"
  - ESH-17-026, "Deficiency Reporting and Correcting"
  - PRD 110-01.0, "Los Alamos National Laboratory Quality Assurance Management Plan," January 4, 1993.
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### Note

Actions specified within this procedure, unless preceded with "should" or "may", are to be considered mandatory guidance (i.e., "shall").

## Planning an assessment

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### Frequency and scope

The **group leader** schedules an appropriate number of management assessments, with appropriate scopes. The schedule will be graded, to assess less frequently, those processes judged to be non-critical and/or highly robust. The following areas will be assessed:

- programmatic effectiveness of major projects or programs in the group
  - process efficiencies
  - compliance with requirements in the group or project quality plan
  - compliance with ES&H requirements
  - compliance with federal laws and regulations
  - communication within the group and among teams or projects
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### Things to look for during assessments

Additional areas that may be considered during any assessment, or could be the scope of a separate assessment, include:

- problems that have the potential to escalate into future violations of requirements (emphasize prevention rather than correction)
  - effectiveness of training program and need for additional or more detailed training
  - operation and utilization of deficiency tracking and corrective action program
  - morale and team cooperativeness of employees
  - effectiveness of information management systems
  - quality of service to customers
  - adequacy of resources
  - adequacy of division and laboratory support services
  - effectiveness of analytical chemistry suppliers
  - interface with DOE, NMED, and EPA regulators
  - adequacy of procedures
  - effective use of contractors/consultants and UC personnel
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### Assigning assessment leader

The **group leader** appoints an assessment leader to conduct an assessment. The group leader should be the assessment leader for some assessments.

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### Planning the assessment

The **assessment leader** plans the scope and general method of assessment to be conducted. Refer to Attachment 1 for more detailed guidance on planning an assessment and refer to Attachment 2 for an example of an assessment plan. The leader may assemble a team of employees to assist in the assessment; the team may include subject matter experts from within the group.

## Planning an assessment, continued

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- Methods for the assessment** An assessment may be conducted by utilizing one or preferably a combination of the following methods (see Attachment 1), or other methods as deemed appropriate by the assessment leader:
- direct observation of work
  - interview of workers
  - review of documentation
  - drills or exercises

## Conducting the assessment

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### How to conduct the assessment

The **assessment leader** and the **assessment team members** conduct the assessment using such tools as collecting and evaluating appropriate documents and records, interviewing personnel within the group, interviewing group customers or stakeholders, conducting a formal walk-through of an area, observing work processes, or other methods as deemed appropriate by the assessment leader.

**NOTE:** Assessments should be "performance-based" rather than "compliance-based." Compliance-based assessments determine only whether the requirements are being met, whereas performance-based assessments additionally examine how efficiently and effectively the requirements are being met as well as ways to continuously improve the processes. Evaluation of the efficiency of a process should be based as much as possible on appropriate measures or metrics.

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### When problems are found

When violations of requirements are found during a management assessment, the **assessment leader** ensures that a deficiency report is initiated to document the violation. Corrective action will be tracked and documented pursuant to the deficiency procedure (ESH-17-026).

When areas for improvement or potential future problems are found, but they are not violations of requirements, the **assessment team members** discuss them with the assessment leader and note them for the final report.

## Documenting the assessment

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### Assessment report

The **assessment team leader** prepares an assessment report that may include:

- an executive summary or abstract
  - description of the scope of the assessment (summarized from the planned scope, because the actual scope may have changed during the assessment)
  - list of assessment team members
  - list or general description of the records used in the assessment
  - list of persons contacted
  - descriptions of results that address items in the scope
  - identification of any deficiencies found
  - recommendations regarding areas for improvement and potential future problems
  - noteworthy practices
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### Focus of the report

Management assessments are intended to evaluate a program, operation, or process, and should result in recommendations for improved communication, management, process efficiency, etc. Unlike deficiency reports which are based on violations of requirements, such recommendations are usually based on best management practices for a management method improvement.

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### Implementing the recommendations

The **group leader** ensures that the recommendations from the assessment are evaluated and implemented, where appropriate, within the group.

## Records resulting from this procedure

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### Records

The following records generated as a result of this procedure are to be submitted as records to the records coordinator:

- assessment report



## ***GUIDANCE FOR PLANNING, CONDUCTING, AND EVALUATING MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENTS***

### Planning

Management assessments are not to be viewed as a formality that is accomplished simply to meet a requirement. Careful planning is required to ensure that the assessments are useful. A schedule for the assessment should be carefully considered. The schedule should consider four factors: time for planning; time for performing; time for evaluating results; time to determine the uses for assessment results. There is a tendency to abbreviate the time allowed for planning and evaluating.

### Methods

There are four methods that can be used in the assessment. In most cases a combination of these will be necessary. The four methods are direct observation of work; interview of workers, customers, or stakeholders; review of documentation; and drills or exercises.

Managers and assessors must ensure that they assume a "no fault" posture during any interviews. Remember, through no fault of their own, workers often will not remember enough detail to thoroughly discuss a work process. Review of documentation does not always reveal the entire situation either; problems with equipment, communication, and other factors are not always discernible in the documentation. Often a work process seems to make sense when read, but the actual work environment can result in an entirely different impression. Drills or exercises have a major disadvantage in that they frequently appear "staged;" it is often impossible to simulate actual conditions in a drill. As a result of these circumstances, every effort should be made to physically observe work in progress. Interviews, document reviews, or drills should not be selected instead of direct observation because of convenience.

### Performing the assessment

Note strengths and weaknesses regarding whether a particular regulation or administrative requirement can be applied. Remember, in a management assessment you are looking for "management things." Do not lapse into a fault finding posture where the workers feel threatened. Weaknesses should generally apply to the management environment that you control. You must remain focused on the management issues and related impact on the safety and reliability of the work processes.

It is important to determine the extent of identified weaknesses. This will help to avoid the situation where too much emphasis is given to a very limited set of circumstances.

### Evaluating results

Make sure the total picture is developed. Do not allow documentation problems to divert your attention from the performance issues. Maintain an interest in preventing recurrence by identifying causes. Determine the relative contribution of management and technical elements. Strengths and weaknesses may be affected by either. Identify which is dominant.

### Documenting results

It is important to communicate observed strengths and weaknesses. A totally negative assessment product can contribute to further deterioration of performance if the workers perceive that only weaknesses are important to management.

It is important to recognize that many problems identified are often not directly caused by the workers. Therefore, managers should use assessment results to initiate improvements that will enhance worker capability to excel. Corrective actions are usually long term and not "quick fixes." Assessment results should also be used for strategic planning, inputs to needs analyses, budget development, staffing, and training development.

[The above information was condensed from the student manual for a DOE training course "Management Assessment Training," 2/10/93.]

## ***EXAMPLE MANAGEMENT ASSESSMENT PLAN***

### **Management Assessment of Beryllium Permitting**

Date for assessment: week of July 5, 1995.

Area to be assessed: Beryllium permit preparation, beryllium stack testing and HEPA filter challenges, beryllium permit records.

Questions to ask:

- Has the annual beryllium operation identification been done?
- Has the ESH-5 list of beryllium operations been reviewed?
- Has the ESH-2 list of the location of beryllium workers been reviewed?
- What was the outcome of the latest NMED beryllium inspection? Are findings being addressed?
- What is the status of permits in development and/or modification?
- Are inspections of beryllium operations being conducted?
- Are inspections of beryllium operation air pollution control equipment being conducted?

Personnel to interview: permit team leader and team members, operating groups using beryllium, ESH-5 industrial hygienists, etc.

Direct observation of work: accompany a beryllium inspection.

Past problem areas to observe: have findings from 1993 EPA multimedia audit been closed out?

Other items to consider during the audit:

- What future beryllium operations will come to the Lab? Will we have permits in time for these operations?

Records to review:

- HEPA filter challenge tests
- Permit modifications
- Inspection logs